

Chaplin Mayor.

Die Martis Decimo Nono die Februarii, 167^r. Annoque Regni Regis Caroli Secundi Angliæ, &c. Tricesimo.

THis Court doth desire Mr. Young to print his Sermon preached on Sunday morning last, at the *Guild-ball Chapell*, before the *Lord Mayor* and *Aldermen* of this City.

Wagstaff.

IMPRIMATUR

*Guil. Jane, R.P.D. Henr. Episc.
Lond. à Sacris Dom.*

*Mar. 4.
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A
S E R M O N

PREACHED

Before the Right Honourable

The Lord Mayor

AND

ALDERMEN

Of the City of

L O N D O N.

AT

GUILD-HALL Chapell,

February the 17th. 1678.

By EDW. YOUNG, B.L.L. Fellow
of New Colledge in Oxford.

L O N D O N,

Printed for William Birch at the Peacock in Cheap-side, and
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The Lord Mayor

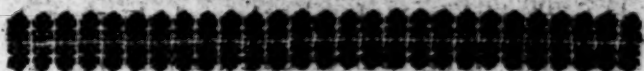
ALDERMEN

LONDON

CHURCH

BEFORE

Printed in London by J. Smith, at the Sign of the Sun, in St. Paul's Church-yard, 1753.



A

Sermon preached before the
L O R D M A Y O R, &c.

February the 17th. 1677

Psal. 52. 7.

Lo this is the man that took not God for his strength, but trusted unto the multitude of his riches, and strengthened himself in his wickedness.

IT is an Observation as true as common, that no man was ever extremely wicked upon a sudden; a hardy finner must be a work of time, a Creature of industry and toil, of conflicts and repulses: And that because Nature, how-ever depraved, has yet left such strong guards upon Vertue, that no-man can break through them without doing violence not onely to his Reason, but his very Complexion too. It is no easie thing to overcome the shame that natu-

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rally attends all dishonest actions, and makes those that commit them to love darkness. It is no easie thing to overcome the fear that naturally haunts the guilty conscience, and makes darkness it self to be no security; much less is it easie to dare to live at enmity with God, after conviction that he is all-knowing, and just, and his wrath a consuming fire. And yet notwithstanding all this, since wofull experience puts it out of question that men do daily arrive at this desperate pitch; that how dangerous soever the precipice be, thither they venture; and being there, bear their danger with less concern then others can behold it: It may be worth our while to enquire how, and by what degrees sin thus advances; and as it advances, insatuates. The scheme is laid down in my Text; where, in the person of *Doeg*, we have the description of a sinner Consummate; one that had fill'd up his measure, and was now ripe and overtaken with judgment. For the first words of the verse; *Lo this is the man*, point out his miserable end, which the Context will tell us, was *destruction and casting out of the Land of the living*. And the rest of the words (on which I design chiefly to insist) are his character, exhibiting the wicked course of life which brought him to
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that miserable end; (viz.) *He took not God, &c.*

The Character consists of three Members, which are as it were the three Stations of the Broad way; The first being Alienation from God; the second Application to the World, the third Impiety profest: and these three are Consequential to each other, as well in the order of Nature, as of the Text.

I begin with the first member of the Character, *He took not God for his strength.*

The order and importance of this default, will best appear if we inquire into the true measures of humane nature; and see what strength she has in her self, and what she wants; and thence deduce the necessity of our dependance upon God.

From those that have searched into the state of humane nature, we have sometimes received very different and incompatible accounts; as though the Inquirers had not been so much learning, as fashioning the subject they had in hand; and that as arbitrarily as a Heathen Carver that could make either a God or a Tressel out of the same piece of wood. For some have cry'd down Nature into such a desperate impotency as would render the Grace of God inefficual;

Quals; and others, on the contrary, have invested her with such power and self-sufficiency, as would render the Grace of God superfluous. The first of these Opinions wrongs Nature in defect by allowing her no strength, which in consequence must make men desperate: The second wrongs Nature in excess by imputing too much strength, which in effect must make men confident: And both of them do equally destroy the Reason of our application to God for strength. For neither will the man that is well in conceit, nor yet the desperate, apply himself to a Physician; because the one cries there is no need; the other, there is no help. I presume therefore that a more distinct view of these two extreme opinions, may properly serve to guide us into the notice of the true state of Nature, which lies between them both.

As for the first Opinion, which wrongs Nature in Defect, it was hatcht in the Heathen Schools upon this occasion: The Philosophers having considered the reproachfull nature of sin, how that in it self it was nothing but injury, turpitude and folly; and in its effects, mischief, inquietude, and ill-boding fears; concluded justly that the commission of it was base and infamous,

famous, and that the deliberate choice of a full action was a greater reproach to reason, than reason was an ornament to man. But nevertheless finding themselves dipt in the common guilt, and too soft to resist the pleasing evil, but likewise too proud to own the reproach of it; They set their wits on work to contrive an expedient, how a man might sin, and yet not be in the fault, and so be able to keep his Crimes and Credit too. The expedient they contrived was this, to maintain, That sin was no voluntary Act, but a meer forced one; and this they proved by two Mediums, Fate and Matter; as each of them introducing a necessity upon humane actions. From the first they argued, that all humane actions were pre-determined by the irresistible Power of an Eternal Decree, so that Man did not purely act any thing of himself, but was a meer passive Tool in the hand of Destiny. From the second they argued, That though man were allowed liberty of Acting, yet he could have no liberty of Choice, because his Choice was always determined to the worse side by a certain insuperable malignity in matter; that is, by the pravity of his constitution. Upon either of these accounts it follow'd that man was a meer impotent slave, always

overruled by force, either from without or within; and therefore since he could not possibly help what he did, why should he be blamed for it? rather let the causes be blamed to which he owed his necessity. Thus did the Philosophers endeavour to bring mankind off from the scandal of their faults by impeaching Nature; as an indulgent Jury will bring off a murderer by a *Non Compunctus*.

As to their Hypothesis of the Irresistible Decree I shall speak no more of it but this, that they who first broacht it, and therefore were most fond of it, found it clogg'd with so many ill consequences, so reflecting upon the Deity, and of such ill influence upon Manners, that though they were accounted the most pertinacious sect of men in the world, they have left it honestly retracted. *Chrysippus* disavows it in *Cicero* & *Gellius*; & the more Modern Stoicks build all their Morals upon a clear contrary foundation: for *Tà ép' autōi* is their first Principle; that is, all men's internal actions are naturally free.

As for the Malignity of Matter, it was a Notion more tolerable among the Heathens, because their errors about the Eternity and Original Qualities of Matter were perhaps Inevitable: but for Christians to impute the

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same

same effects to the Corruption of our Nature by the Fall, as though we had thereby contracted such a Complexional Necessity of sinning, as neither precept nor caution, nor all the remedies that God has provided, could rescue us from that Necessity: This is a great Calumny to Nature, and affront to God's goodness, and a meer crude apology of such as were first resolved for a lazy indulgence to Vice. And yet this pretence is not unusual; it is not unusual to hear men confess their sins in such a subtle form, as though they were drawing Schemes of Sophistry against the day of Judgement. "I must not deny my sins, (says the Man) the righteous man falls seven times a day; we dwell in a body of sin; Our first Parent eat of the forbidden fruit; and so derived a Curse upon his unhappy posterity; *Homo sum*, I am a son of Adam, I need say no more to speak my guilt. And now what means such a Confession as this, but that the Man is willing to discharge the burthen of his Conscience upon something out of his own power, and to impute that it is not will and choice, but force of constitution that makes us sinners; that we are born with such tainted principles, flesh so stubborn, and appetites so impetuous, that

neither Rule, nor Institution, nor Endeavour,
 nor Grace it self can regulate them; and that
 thereupon as *Adam* urged against God for the
 first sin committed, *The Woman that thou gavest
 me beguiled me and I did eat*: so his Posterity
 might urge for all that have been committed
 since, *The Nature that thou hast allotted us,
 has betrayed us, and we are sinners*. Thus will
 men dawb with *untemper'd mortar*. (in the Pro-
 phet's Allegory) *though the wall shall be cast
 down, and they in the midst of it*. For to
 assign the true measures of Nature in reference
 to Defect. Lay down this for the Fundamental
 Truth. That whatsoever there is, neither of
 impotence or positive malignity in our Natures,
 it is onely such as is consistent both with the
 Riches and Mercy of God; and therefore we
 may certainly conclude, that it cannot be so
 much as shall either administer matter of excuse
 to those that will be bad, or argument of despair
 to those that desire to be good. We are born with
 propensions to Vice, and appetites prone to
 close with tempting Evils; but these are so far
 from being actually evil themselves, that they
 are the very life of Vertue, and foundation of
 Beward. 'Tis true, they create difficulties in
 vertue, and make the way rugged; but then

God.

God is pleased to consider these difficulties indulgently; and for that very reason he admits man to terms of repentance and reconciliation; whereas the Angels who were made of a purer nature, and less obnoxious to temptation, were allowed no such remedy. But moreover these difficulties which our infirmity creates, are far from being insuperable; we know our armour, and we are commanded to fight, and we are assured of Victory: whatsoever of strength we have not in ourselves, we know where to have supplied; and whatsoever those excellencies are which we deplore as lost in the Fall, the Gospel assures us, that supervening Grace makes a full repair of them. Grace is new light to the understanding, and new power to the will, and new regularity to the faculties that ought to obey, and a new harmony to our whole discomposed frame. In a word, Grace is more to us now in the state of corruption, than in the state of primitive perfection we could have been to our selves. Whosoever therefore shall consider the defects and impotence of our present state, together with the rich promises of God in Christ, I know nothing that he ought reasonably to argue or infer thence but this, that we now lie under a stricter obligation to

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live in a perpetual dependance upon God; that we have now a double tie to be Religious; that is, both to serve God and our selves; forasmuch as our addresses do not more effectually pay him homage, then they do supply our own wants. God could give without asking, if it seemed good; but then perhaps we should be more apt to glory as though we had not Received: whereas to receive when we want, is the same thing in effect, as to have had it in store; but with this advantage, that it makes us retain a greater veneration for the Donor; as a man is in greater probability to live humble and dutifull when he has his livelihood conferted on him by daily dispensation, then if he had the whole in entire possession. God could redintegrate Nature, if it seemed good; and re-instate her in her original rights and powers: But then perhaps the man who now in the state of corruption attributes his vices to his Constitution, not to his Will, would if he had been born with greater strength and sufficiency have attributed the glory of his vertue to his own conduct and not unto God; and so had he had in him lesse of the sin of the man, he would have had more of the sin of Lucifer, that is, pride and affectation. 'Tis a wise Rule in all things of Providence to conclude,

conclude, That that is best that now is; and questionless it could not be better with us then it is, notwithstanding all the infirmities of our Nature, if we had but the happiness to make such use of them as God intends, that is, to fix our dependance and application more strictly to himself.

I pass in the second place to the Notion of those that exalt Nature above her due measures, & invest her with such a self-sufficiency, as would make the Grace of God appear superfluous.

Quid opus est Votis? saith the Philosopher; what need is there to pray? make thy self a good man; 'tis idle to petition God for that which thou canst bestow upon thy self. And many among Christians (beside *Pelagius*) seem to have consulted the Philosopher more then the Scriptures, for their method of inculcating Religion and a good life. They recommend vertue in pompous harangues, and urge Religion from the Rational Topicks of conveniency and inconveniency; they display the amiableness and advantages of Good, and the deformity and mischiefs of Evil. "How ugly is envy? how tormenting is revenge? how brutal is drunkenness? how pernicious is lust? On the contrary, meekness, temperance and benediction, how serene are they in their state," and

"and how commodious in their effects? And
 "needs a man now (say they) any infusion
 "here to determine his choice? or any assisting
 "influence to put it in execution? All that
 "he seems to need is onely this, that he do not
 "turn fool, and desert the use of those faculties
 "and powers which Nature has given him.
 After such a Moral discourse as this, having
 called upon Reason, and stirred up advertency
 to apply it, they presume they have done e-
 nough, and leave us to grow good upon our
 own stock and strength. But alas! these are
Icarus his flights, Nature has provided no
 wings for man to soar so high with. Vice will
 never be chas'd out of the world with Inve-
 ctives, nor Vertue advanc'd to her Empire by
 Panegyricks. The most prudent advertency,
 and the most manly resolution; the most ratio-
 nal love, and the most generous indignation,
 that ever Opinionative Morallist could con-
 ceive and fortifie his breast withall, will never
 be able to secure a man against the subtle ap-
 proaches or the violent assaults of sin: 'Tis
 onely the Divine Assistance that is our castle
 and defence, and the vital spring of all our
 good habits; and whosoever terminates his
 hopes, even of serving and pleasing God, upon
 the

the confidence of any other strength then what is derived from God; his hopes are impious, and he must miscarry.

'Tis true that Rational Arguments are proper, nay necessary to excite a man to his duty; which is a Rational service, and effected by Rational endeavours, not lazy presumptions: But then this is the point, A man must likewise know, that when he is about his duty, he is not sufficient for that which he is about: for God has reserved a partial agency to himself, and he does as much command our application to him for this assistance, as he does demand all the rest of our duty. For as God does require us to keep his Commandments, so in order to the doing of this, he does altogether as much require us to Ask, to Seek, and to Knock; that is, to apply our selves for ability to do what he commands: and therefore he who shall undertake to reason and argue a man into his duty, without insisting on the necessary application to God, does the same thing in resemblance, as if he should cut off the Travelers legs, and provide him with a staff. That one instance of S. Peter to our Saviour, *Mat. 26: I Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee;*

also; being as from a Resolution, upon as good motives, and from as honest a heart, as any man else can ever dare to pretend to, has sufficiently baffled all humane confidence, and demonstrated that the opinion of strength in ourselves is vanity; and the issue of no defeat.

Having thus adjusted the true measures of humane Nature, as consisting between the two extremes of self-sufficiency to Good, and absolute necessity to Evil: it results, that the not making God our strength (which in one word we may call devotion; *Dog's* first charge in my Text) is the great Parent Evil; an Evil more prolifical in us than that of *Adam*; and as we will with *S. Augustin*, attribute the Universal Origine of sin to a Deficient Cause, it will be to this Defect of Application to God, as being the first, the inlet, and the cause of all others. For whatsoever inadvertencies a man may be guilty of before, it is impossible he should fall under the domination of any vicious habits, untill he has first fallen from this Guard of the Divine Assistance. But then on the other side, when a man has once by neglect fallen from this Guard, which enters through

desuetude,

desecrated, or infrequently, or merely formally of devotion, he has suffered his mind to grow alienated from God, and his dependance upon him, to diminish and fail; that man is then arrived to a pitch, where it is as impossible for him to stay, as it is to fix after the first step down a precipice: He must go on, and his next genuine advance, is to the second Member of *Doeg's* charge, (*viz.*) *He trusted in the multitude of his Riches.* For

The Soul of man, like common Nature, admits no *Vacuum*; if God be not there, Mammon must be; and it is as impossible to serve neither, as it is to serve both. And for this there is an essential reason in our constitution; For Man is designed and born an Indigent Creature, full of wants and appetites, and a restless desire of happiness, which he can by no means find within himself; and this indispensably obliges him to seek for his happiness abroad: Now if he seek his happiness from God, he answers the very intention of his frame; and has made a wise choice of an object, that is adequate to all his wants and desires: But then if he does not seek his happiness from God, he must necessarily seek it somewhere else; for his appetites

cannot hang long undetermined, they are eages and must have their quarry; *If he forsake the fountain of Living waters, yet he cannot forsake his thirst*; and therefore he lies under the necessity of *hewing out broken Cisterns to himself*; He must pursue, and at least promise himself satisfaction in other enjoyments. Thus when our Hope, our Trust, and our Expectations abate towards God, they do not abate in themselves, but are onely scattered among undue and inferiour Objects. And this makes the connexion infallible between Indevotion, and Moral Idolatry; that is, between the neglect of God's worship, and worshipping the Creature; for whatsoever share we abate towards God, we always place upon something else; and whatsoever thing else we prosecute with that share of love, desire, or complacency, which is due unto God, that is in effect our Idol; as is expressly declared in the case of Riches, *Col. 3:5*. which is the particular matter I am to treat about in this second part.

Riches are Gods blessing, and the good man's promise, and administer not onely the lawfull comforts to Nature, but the greatest means and opportunities to Verrue; and yet the managery of

of them is so nice and hazardous, and they occasionally produce so much of evil, that, as the Poets did therefore conclude them to come from Hell, so the Scriptures tell us in earnest that they generally tend thither.

Not things themselves, but affections and opinions about things are evil, says the Rule; and it being so in the present case, I shall briefly note some affections of men that thus pervert Riches into evil.

I shall mention three. *Excesse of Desire.*
Mistake of Right.
And undue Complacency.

The first respects Riches in Prospect, the other two in Possession. I begin with Excess of Desire.

The Stoick's Wise man would have no desire, for fear of Disappointment; but 'tis certain the Good man will have no great desire, for fear of Impiety. For a great desire can hardly be entertained without a secret quarrel with providence, an unthankfulness for what is present, and a preference of our own wish before the good pleasure and ordination of God. When the *Israelites* desired a King, they desired no more then the completion of God's own promise

to them; there was nothing lawfull in their desire, but the excess of it; It was come to this, *Nay but we will have a King;* and then God sent them a King in his anger, and many infamous calamities during the whole course of his reign. Nor was *Rachel's* desire of Children any other then natural and just, till it came to this impatience, *Give me Children or else I die;* and then God disappointed her with a Grant, and punisht her with her very wish; for she died in Child-bearing. *All things are lawfull for me* (says the Apostle) *but I will not come under the power of any;* and so in like manner, the desire of all things is lawfull, while it is temperate, but an imperuous desire grows a Master in the Soul; it brings it under its power: and our freedom, and our reason, and our conscience too, must upon occasion submit to its Tyranny. Hence it comes to pass, that the desire of Riches does very often absolutely profane the soul, and turn the Temple of God into meer Shop and Exchange. When the man should be Religious, his thoughts are never at home; they are abroad in attendance upon the design in hand, and Mammon is the commanding object of all his value and devotion.

God

God Almighty requires that the strongest breathings of our heart should, like the Smoke of the Accepted Sacrifice, mount directly to Heaven; but the Covetous man's desire does, like the rejected Smoke, incline all downwards, and spend itself upon the Earth. He is restless in contrivance, and hardy in pursuit; confident in attempts, and bold and importunate in addresses; and what is worst, he looks upon fordid compliances, and base connivances, and all the acts of dissimulation and fraud, as only provident methods of attaining his end. His thoughts being thus in full employ, and his imagination always busy, he lets time rowl over his head, without making any reflexions worthy his immortal parts; so that secretly does the poor man tug for a heap of earth, with more toyle, or less Religion then he would use; and thus Thus does man in the first place violate Riches by Desire, and make them his sins before they are his. But if they come into possession, he violates them in the second place by mistake of Right.

It is certain that the worldly man studies nothing so accurately as his Title to his Estate; and yet when all is done he mistakes it; for he counts

counts himself a Proprietor where he is but a Steward. For the good things of this life being by no means the Christians portion, God never consigns them to us into Property, but only into Trust. They employ the Manager, and approve the Faithfull; but he that fails in his accounts will find, that his Revenues are his Debts. 'Tis therefore the Wise man's care to make friends with the Mammon; to sow as he hopes to reap; to justify his expences, and to bless the stock by thankfulnesse, temperance and charity: But he that assumes more right then God has given, that is, he that takes what he has to be absolutely his own, the first Inference he makes is this, that he may do with it what he pleases; that he may either spend it upon his own luxury, or hoard it up for that of his Heirs; and thus he eludes all the obligations of charity, and esteems the casting his bread upon the waters as great a folly in the figure, as it is in the letter. It was thus that Dives in the Parable, had carved for himself, who when he petitioned for a drop of water to allay his torments, his mouth was stopped, and his petition rejected with this sole answer, *Son remember that thou in thy life-time hadst thy good things.*

things. Questionlesse many a man has had his good things in his life-time, and yet his share after this life not a jot the lesse; but this was *Dives* his case, he took the good things of this life for his property, and his portion, and used them accordingly; and therefore it was that now he must expect no more.

The third Affection whereby a man vitiates his Riches is undue Complacency, which is an Acquiescence of mind in the Object of enjoyment, or (in the Scripture expression) *a setting our hearts upon it.*

A moderate complacency or satisfaction in the good things of this world is requisite to make a man thankfull, as a proportion of spirits is necessary to sense; but an absolute complacency, or rest in them, is (like a great excessse of Spirits) a very stupor and losse of mind. The best rule about Riches is to possess them as though we possessed them not; that is, to respect them with such an equality of temper, as neither to place our happinesse in their presence, nor our misery in their losse: But the worldly man possesses them so, that he is possesst by them; they take in his heart, and then fill it so compleatly, that he is not sensible

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of

of any other hunger or desire. How sweetly does he sing, Soul take thy rest, for I am rich, and increas'd with goods, and have need of nothing? How securely does he sleep when his senses drop tired from variety of diversions, and lie lockt up in the fumes of agreeable juices? Do we think that the Kingdom of Heaven is like to suffer violence from such a man? no, it is rather to be feared that he would count Heaven it self a violence, and an overture of change would shock and disgust him. For what indeed should he do there? whose conceptions are wholly levelled to the pleasures of sense; of wines and meats, and their wanton consequences; and who is no more apprehensive of immaterial joys, then the grossest brute is of Musick or Picture. And here I limit the second station of the Broad way; that is *Daeg's* second charge, *He trusted in the multitude of his Riches.*

And now the sinner being advanc't thus far through the neglect of Piety, and love of the World, and finding his road gratefull, and the return tedious, and the visage of repentance so austere, that if he put himself under her conduct, he must lose all that he knows how to prize;

prize; that is, gayety and pleasure, and perhaps riches too: and these thoughts making deeper impressions, then any thing future can, upon a mind whose reasonings are now grown weak, and consideration little; what can he resolve but to go on? But because to go on, and at the same time to look back, is distracting; because reflexion upon guilt is a torment, and a cowardly sinner is an insufferable penance, he finds it necessary to take better courage; that is, in the words of my third part, *To strengthen himself in his wickedness*: and thereupon he betakes himself to the two strong holds of sin, Debauchery and Atheism, and thence he bids defiance to Heaven. Like an ungrateful Subject, who after he has long abused his Prince, and his crimes are grown so great that they cannot be compounded on easie terms, and his stomach so haughty too, that he hates to stoop to due submission and allegiance, He draws his sword and flings away the scabbard, and resolves to defend himself by a meditated rebellion.

The first strong hold that the rebel sinner betakes himself to is Debauchery, which in its proper notion, is no more then an expresse art

against Thinking. To indulge appetites and gratifie senses, to live soft and delicate according to the scheme of studied pleasure, is the businesse of the Voluptuous; but the Debauchee is not so choice: For his end is not so much to please, as to amuze; and his whole study is onely for a course of expedients how to darken the mind, and divert thought, and fence out reflexion. His wine is not to refresh but to drown; and therefore he drinks not like an Epicure, but rather like a *Spartan Slave*, when he drunk to bring drinking into disgrace. His Discourse is not for understanding, but for noise. Noise is good company and wit; and so with hurry and laughter, and any thing that is loud, he stifles the remonstrances of Reason, and murmurs of Conscience, as drum and trumpet cover the cryes of a battel. He guards himself against the awe of vertue, by an habitual contempt of the good; and secures himself against counsel, by a preventing derision of the serious: He hates every solemn act, if it be but a grace at his meal; lest the remembrance of a God should check his jollity, and bridle his excessse. But then, if notwithstanding all this art, his body chance to tire under the
drudgery

drudgery of vice, and so he be overtaken with the intervals of apprehensive thoughts, the last Refuge of his uneasie and desperate mind is Atheism. And questionlesse, how poor a Refuge soever Atheism be, it was never any other then Refuge: it is an Opinion that was never offered by Reason, but always sought for by Distresse. And this without doubt is the reason why one age of Christianity has produc'd more Atheists, then were ever known in the whole extent and duration of Heathenism; because the Christian lying under greater convictions, and therefore stronger pressuress of conscience, must needs be more forcibly urg'd to fly to this Refuge, then the Heathen could be, whose knowledge of sin and judgement being lesse, his fears must necessarily be so too. After the man has once resolved upon Atheism, he does generally in the first place swear Fidelity to his Opinion; that is, he doth by familiar forms of Oaths and raving Imprecations inculcate to himself that God is nothing but a Mormoe or Bug-bear; and so he hardens himself in his pretence.

In the next place he pronounces Religion a Trick; contrived by the Art of Princes, and conserved by the Interest of Priests; that if ever any talk't wisely about Religion, it is only they who discard all particular positive Religions, and stick onely to that of Nature. But then what is Nature, or at least the Interpreter of Nature, but common usage and Custom? And what is it that we have not Custom for? We have Custom for all sorts of Vices; we have Custom for opposite Religions, and for no Religion; and so in fine from Nature can arise no Obligation at all.

In the next place the Doctrine of Spirits is cryed down as absurd; and all the matters of fact that tend to assert their being, can obtain no more credit, then *Lucian's* raillery upon the enchanted Broomstaff. But most of all absurd in his conceit, and unphilosophical is the Doctrine of Immortal Souls. "For what do Souls act above the power of subtle matter in the state of Union? and how can they disengage themselves from common perishing in the state of dissolution? The Beasts approach very near us in our most wise and sagacious

“sagacious operations without the hazard
“of being Immortal; and why should man
“fancy that hazard to himself? No, we
“are born at all adventures; and we shall
“be as though we had never been; and our
“Spirits shall vanish into soft air. And
now what can be done with a man of this
persuasion? 'Tis to as little purpose to tell
him of Hell and torments; as of *Charon* and
Cerberus; All is *Par sollicito Fabula somnio*,
as his Minion Poet hath concluded it;
And thus the Atheist is become as safe
and impregnable, as in a Castle of
Brasse.

But alas the miserable dream of peace that
must wake into an eternity of real evils!
Alas the pityable Reasons that must be con-
futed by so sad an Experiment! For as
we have hitherto taken the prospect of the
sinner's way, so my Text requires us to look
a little farther, and advert his end. You
have seen what the man was; he was gay
and secure in his wickedness; but now *Lo*
this is the man; this is his present state;
he is become a spectacle of vengeance, an
object of terror and of scorn, and pointed out
for

for a warning to all that shall come after.
Lo this is the Man that had shipwrackt his
Faith, and wasted his Conscience, and cor-
rupted his Mind, so that he had lost the no-
tices of what he should do, as well as the
care of what he did: But now his Miseries
have rectified his Notions; He believes and
trembles; He sees God again in the terrour
of his judgements; and is convinced by an
eternal dying, that the soul is subject to no
other death. He now lies scourged with past
enjoyments; and terrified with his present
passions: His Wit and Parts groan under
the Conviction of Folly; and his shame and
anguish are consummated by despair. But
my Text onely points at this; nor is it my
businessse to insist upon it any farther. I
have my end in minding you from the Ex-
ample, that Sin and Judgement are insepara-
bly linkt together; That if we will esape
Daeg's end, we must avoid his way; That if
we will resist sin successfully, we must resist
it in its first Issues, and pluck up the roots of it,
which in passing I have discovered.

And now that the most important of what I
have said, may be lost more immediately upon
your

your thoughts, I shall summe it up into one sentence, and conclude: The lesson that the whole example does most genuinely teach us is this, That when a man once ceases to take God for his strength, (which was *Deeg's* first default), when he once neglects to apply himself to Heaven for conduct and support, that man naturally falls from one sin to another, and there is no security of stopping betwixt Indevotion and the Bottomlesse Pit.

From which the Divine mercy prevent us.

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